

Wiretap Use Increased To Fight Crime In Md.

BALTIMORE (AP) — George Beall, U.S. attorney for Maryland, says he has increased the use of wiretaps in efforts to combat organized crime he claims is linked with syndicate figures.

"Anyone who says there is no connection between big city organized crime and Baltimore doesn't know what he's talking about," Beall said recently.

He refused to state the number of wiretaps currently in operation but said he has authorized four in Baltimore and three in the rest of Maryland since taking over the federal prosecutor's office last June.

Stephen H. Sachs, the previous U.S. attorney, "didn't use legal wiretap because his boss, (former Atty. Gen.) Ramsey Clark disapproved of it," Beall said.

Beall claimed the use of such surveillance has indicated greater involvement by outsiders

than Sachs had said existed in Maryland organized crime.

Nonetheless, he added, Baltimore remains a city "closed" to direct syndicate control but with "direct contact, cooperation and communication between people in Baltimore and Cosa Nostra people in Las Vegas, New York, Boston, Detroit and Miami.

"When I say Cosa Nostra, I don't mean one controlling group," Beall said. "I mean sophisticated criminal syndicates which each have their own territory."

He said Baltimore has no single crime overlord but several bosses, "none of whom is big on a national scale."

Beall said he expected "a big break" by the end of March from a special strike force of five layers and 12 investigators one of 15 such efforts against organized crime in the country.